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MAINE

Site Visit: The Press Hotel

By Hayley Panagakis

Once the printing plant of Maine’s largest newspaper, [The Press Hotel](#) in Portland, which opened in May, is inspired by its wordsmith history. Every detail in the luxury Marriott Autograph Collection Hotels property, from alphabet-centric designs in carpeting to a typewriter wall in the main lobby—where 80 vintage typewriters are mounted and cascade from the main level down to the Art Gallery on the next floor—brings the building’s storied past to life. The press theme carries into the hotel’s 110 guest rooms, which are outfitted with 1920s-style desks and leather chairs embroidered with the quote, “The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog”—an old pangram used by writers practicing their touch-typing skills.

The hotel's four meeting areas are named after actual rooms that would have existed in the building when the paper ran, says Linda Prescott, director of sales and marketing, from the 300-sq.-ft. News and Press rooms to the 1,000-sq.-ft. Composing Room. The 500-sq.-ft. Editorial Room, formerly a place for storing archives and resource materials, has a bookcase along one wall and natural light. Planners in need of more space can make use of the Gallery Common—a space created by merging several rooms that can accommodate up to 250 people.

On-site dining options include The Inkwell, serving light fare paired with vintage cocktails and local microbrews; and the 65-seat Union restaurant helmed by chef Josh Berry, who also prepares the catering menus. Two pastry chefs also bake breads and pastries in-house. The hotel works closely with local Allagash Brewing Company, which hosts on-property tastings to talk about new brews. Off-property, teambuilding activities can include two-hour sailing trips through Portland Harbor with Portland Schooner Co.; curated tours at Portland Museum of Art; and fly-fishing, shooting, archery and kayaking at L.L.Bean Outdoor Discovery Schools.

Insider Tip

Brush up on your Latin and see if you can spot the word hidden within the letterpress wall behind the lobby's front desk. Hint: It's spelled backward.